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Official Records

108th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 16 April 1996, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral ..... (Portugal)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 120 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/50/888/Add.4)

The Acting President: I should like to draw the General Assembly's attention to document A/50/888/Add.4. In a letter contained in that document, the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communications dated 28 February, 6 March and 3 and 11 April 1996, Vanuatu has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 12 *(continued)*

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Secretary-General (A/50/847)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance on its twelfth meeting (A/50/525)

Letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the President of the General Assembly (A/50/926)

Draft resolution (A/50/L.69)

The Acting President: This afternoon the Assembly will continue its plenary meetings devoted to public administration and development.

I call first on Mr. Wang Xuexian, representative of China.

Mr. Wang Xuexian (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): It goes without saying that public administration plays an important role in the economic development of a State. This is especially so when the State is in the process of carrying out economic reforms and restructuring. Without dynamic macro-adjustment and regulation on the part of the Government, and without a highly efficient public administration, it will be difficult for any country to conduct economic activities in an orderly manner, and its efforts to realize sustained economic growth and sustainable development will be frustrated. It is therefore useful for States, in the framework of General Assembly resolution 49/136, to exchange information and experiences on public

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administration and development and to review United Nations activities in this area.

However, it is also necessary for us clearly to understand that public administration is in essence closely related to the tradition, culture and polity of the State concerned. A particular system of public administration is always shaped by the specific conditions of the State in question. The international community should respect the choices made by a country in consideration of its specific circumstances. The success or failure of public administration also has to be judged by the peoples of the countries concerned in the light of their specific conditions and needs. There is no universal model whose success can be guaranteed everywhere. Exchange of information among States is always helpful, but such an exchange must be conducted on the basis of non-interference in the internal affairs of others and respect for diversity in the field of public administration. It must not be used as a pretext for meddling in the internal affairs of other countries.

This should also be the basis on which the role of the United Nations in the area of public administration is to be considered. The United Nations role in this area has always been to facilitate exchanges of information and experience and to provide technical support for capacity-building. While it is useful to explore the opportunities for strengthening the United Nations role with regard to public administration, this does not mean that the general direction of United Nations activities in this area should be changed in any way, much less that the United Nations should now refocus its attention on working out a standard model for all States to emulate. At the same time, it should be emphasized that the strengthening of the United Nations activities in this area should not be achieved at the expense of its existing role in other areas. In particular, United Nations programmes and activities in the fields of economic and social development, environmental protection and other areas of special concern to the developing countries should not suffer negative consequences as a result.

The relevant reports under consideration also contain several recommendations concerning institutional arrangements in the area of public administration. We believe that we must proceed with caution on this matter. Several United Nations working groups are now in the process of considering the restructuring of the institutional arrangements of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, including functional commissions, expert committees and their agendas. A basic consideration underlying this exercise is to avoid duplication and enhance efficiency. Past experience has clearly shown that establishing new institutional mechanisms is not the right way to proceed in strengthening the role of the United Nations. In fact, it flies in the face of the reform methods under way. Instead, we should focus our attention on existing mechanisms and try to work out ways to strengthen their resources and capacities so as to enable them better to perform their functions. This should be the basic starting point for our consideration of related institutional issues.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Pierre Atchi Atsin, Minister of Employment, the Civil Service and Social Security of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Atchi Atsin (Côte d'Ivoire) (*interpretation from French*): Through me, Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the General Assembly's decision to take up, at the request of the African Civil Service Ministers who met in Tangiers on 20 and 21 June 1994, the question of public administration and development at its resumed fiftieth session.

In fact, the first initiative to increase awareness of the role of public administration in development came with the creation of the United Nations, among whose premises was the hallowed concept that the emergence of peaceful societies could be built only upon competent administration. There have been many recent attempts in this regard that have drawn on the results of recent meetings, all equally fruitful. But as Minister of Employment, the Civil Service and Social Security of Côte d'Ivoire, I will touch upon only those issues that I feel to be most significant in this respect.

The Pan-African Conference of Ministers of the Civil Service, held in Tangier, Morocco, on 20 and 21 June 1994, adopted the Tangier Declaration, which states that:

> "any sustainable economic and social development must be backed by an efficient, competent and responsible administration". *(A/49/495, annex, fourth paragraph)*

This Declaration shows us the need to invest in human resources as an essential factor in improving performance in the public sector.

The Ministers committed themselves to establishing policies to promoting an environment conducive to the emergence of public administrations that will serve

development. The African Ministers also advocated the establishment of relations of complementarity and synergy between the public and private sectors.

In January this year the regional workshop held in Abidjan on public administration and administrative reform in the French-speaking African countries reaffirmed the importance and urgent need to establish a less cumbersome, more competent and better-paid civil service that does not obstruct a country's development.

More recently, in Namibia in March, over 50 delegations of African Governments considered ways and means to build an efficient and professional civil service for economic and social development. It is clear that the important role of public administration is well understood by the African Governments, since they hope that a world conference will be devoted to this subject.

From an early date, African countries recognized the close link between public administration and development. Indeed, lasting economic and social development requires rigorous planning, which can be done only by a competent public administration that can elaborate it the better to achieve certain desired development objectives. Achieving these broad objectives requires at the very least that our countries have administrations that truly understand development problems. But, more important even than having this capacity for understanding, administrations should be deeply rooted in the societies they have been created to serve. Hence, their success will depend on their level of integration and their ability to direct development at both the planning and implementation stages. In other words, to return to the reason we are meeting here today, economic and social development can be based only on a competent civil service integrated into a society managed by streamlined institutions with true public management capabilities.

The great changes that we have witnessed in recent years have shown us the extent of the tasks we face and how great is the need for change in order better to adapt public administration to the new context. Beyond piecemeal efforts, however, unanswered questions remain for each of our countries on how to establish criteria for streamlining, given the size of our administrations and our real needs. If we achieve this streamlining, we can avoid the excessive expenditure of financial resources that pointlessly increases spending in the public sector at the expense of the contributors.

In the search for this quantitative balance, we encounter the problem, on the one hand, and, of quality administration with competent human resources, on the other hand, of procedures for devolution and decentralization, both of which relate to the need to regionalize administrative activities. Since the State clearly cannot do everything, there is a need to create an interactive partnership between the civil service and the private sector, given the complexity of the tasks to be accomplished and the growing role of civil society, whose breadth and skills have now been recog' 'zed and are sought out.

Aware of this, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, under the supreme authority of President Henri Konan-Bédié, is committed to several reforms with the following goals: providing personnel and salaried workers with tools better adapted to their training; unifying management and salary scales and reforming payment procedures for civil servants and other State employees; rationalizing procedures, methods and modes of management, simplifying and making them more flexible and ensuring the necessary decentralization of functions; preserving equity and justice within public administration; rigorously selecting and training State employees in order to strengthen administrative ethics and transparency; developing human resources by prioritizing the fields of health, education and employment — a special programme for human-resource development is currently under way in Côte d'Ivoire; strengthening institutional capacities by appropriately and efficiently providing the services necessary to their functions; implementing a national training plan for State employees; reforming the pay system, rewarding performance and making the necessary changes in the legal and judiciary institutions; and finally, establishing an ongoing dialogue with the private sector and other social partners.

In conclusion, I wish to state that any concerted development effort, be it bilateral or multilateral, depends on the administrative and institutional capacity of our States to manage resources rationally. But that capacity does not exist everywhere. Therefore, the international community and partners in development must provide on a priority basis particular support to our countries in establishing public administration that is responsive to modern management standards.

Success in the field of development depends primarily on sound public administration. The international community must be fully involved and committed if it truly wishes to help developing countries.

We fervently hope that this Assembly will be the place in which this awareness can flourish.

The Acting President: I call on Mr. Maris Gailis, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia.

Mr. Gailis (Latvia): It is a great honour for me to address, on behalf of the Republic of Latvia, the General Assembly at its resumed fiftieth session on public administration and development. Throughout its existence, the United Nations has been the defender and promoter of the values of democratic society. The representatives of the 185 Member States of the Organization have been invited to examine the question of public administration and development, one of the cornerstones of democratic society. On this occasion, I should like to pay tribute to all the Governments and institutions that have demonstrated support for and solidarity with Latvia on its way towards a democratic society.

After the restoration of independence in 1991, Latvia faced the need to change its administration from a command system to a democratic one with balances of power and a service orientation. There was also a need to overhaul Latvia's legislative, judicial and executive institutions. The fifth Parliament of the Republic of Latvia, elected in the summer of 1993, and the parties of the coalition Government had the political will to take the path of change. Their goal was a modernized public sector able to manage a changed world and deal with the challenges arising as Latvia moves into Europe. The administrative systems of democratic European States were used as a model for reform.

The Government used the following methods to achieve its strategic objectives:

the Ministry of State Reform was established as a focus for administrative change;

political will was exhibited by the placement of a high-level politician at the head of the Ministry;

a reform programme for public administration was drafted and approved at Cabinet level, based on the principles of the rule of law, fairness, openness, respect for the individual, accountability, efficiency and rationalism;

a political-administrative division was established with the awareness that, in public service, there must be a capacity both to reflect the political wishes of the electorate and to ensure the continuity and sound management of State affairs regardless of changes in the political leadership;

a neutral professional civil service is being created that will in the future ensure continuity and be able to serve any political party that comes to power;

it has been recognized that the low wages and low prestige of the civil service, which affect the quality of the individuals attracted to the civil service, must be remedied;

new legislation has been adopted to increase benefits, mandate education and professional training, increase the requirements and limitations on outside employment and address other activities incompatible with public service;

a retraining programme for the entire civil service is focused on addressing the basic skills and knowledge of civil servants, including in economics, legal issues, communications and computers;

the Government has focused on streamlining and improving lines of management and information within the public-service system in order to increase professionalism in decision-making and to create a system of accountability;

dialogue has been established with non-governmental organizations, and efforts are being made to shift public sector functions to the private sector;

a public-information campaign has been launched to link government with the citizen and to educate citizens on their rights and responsibilities in society;

trust in government is being created through ethics programmes and freedom-of-information legislation.

Latvia has been involved in the construction of a new democratic society with a market-based economy for four and a half years, since the restoration of its independence in August 1991. The demolition of a command economy and the creation of the foundations of a free society has been a painful process. Economic and administrative transformation has been strongly influenced by the interplay of internal politics.

Among many urgent steps the country has taken on the road to democracy is the adoption of an administrative reform aimed at changing the structure of government, creating an effective civil service, democratizing the State and delegating State functions from the top to the bottom. The decision-making system of the Cabinet of Ministers has been improved through the inclusion of financial analysis, legal analysis and inputs from private sources. A new, functioning civil service system, with a broad nationwide retraining system for civil servants, was created; funding problems may yet jeopardize this system. An understanding of the need for a politically neutral civil service and a shift towards a service-oriented attitude in public service was accomplished. The distribution of public information on all policy changes was introduced.

There are, however, obstacles to change. Opinions and beliefs in society as a whole, and among civil servants in particular, have been slow to shift. A long-term effort and other trust-enhancing activities are necessary to educate politicians, civil servants and the public on the basic principles needed for viable administrative structures in a democratic system. The recent dissolution of the Government's focal point for administrative reform has left some efforts lacking in political will, resulting in some slowdown and backsliding. Attitudes left over from Soviet administrative practice hamper the implementation of changes — for example, the lack of success in adopting freedom-of-information and transparency legislation.

The orientation towards European integration will help speed the transformation of Latvia, in that it provides a clear direction for the reform process. The status of association with the European Union gives Latvia the advantage of access to expert advice and other technical assistance. Our multilateral and bilateral partners have made a valuable contribution to the development of a new Latvian society.

The Acting President: I call on Mr. Fausto Correia, Secretary of State for Public Administration of Portugal.

Mr. Correia (Portugal) (*spoke in Portuguese; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation*): It is a great honour for me, as a Portuguese and member of the Government, to speak before the General Assembly at its fiftieth session and thus to be able to pay tribute to Mr. Freitas do Amaral, President of this United Nations forum, though he is not present today. My sincere and affectionate tribute goes out to this man of the law, an exemplary citizen, politician by vocation and internationally renowned jurist who has made unsurpassed contributions to Portugal and its public administration.

Aware of the world's social and economic problems, the thirteenth Constitutional Government, of which Mr. António Guterres is Prime Minister, has established a four-year programme characterized in essence by the highest quality democracy, a desire for equal opportunity for all, practical solidarity for the neediest and most suffering sectors, and particular priority given to the education and training of the Portuguese people.

Within the modern vision adopted by the Government, development is sustainable, regionally balanced and socially fair. The political challenge has become as clear as it is unavoidable. Thus it is necessary to stress employment, competitiveness and solidarity; to draw up a model within which the economy is a pillar of national dignity; and to promote a new relationship between the State and society through a series of institutional reforms that increase efficiency and reduce the size of State bureaucracy. Over the next four years, this political vision will have an important effect on the State reform process in general and on strategic activities to modernize and reform public administration.

The strategic factors of political policies necessarily involve a redefinition of the role of the State and public services in society.

We are all aware that in societies with scarce resources, which from time to time suffer economic crises of varying magnitude, the efficiency of public administration is doubly important, not only as the potential manager of the organizational and human capital at its disposal, but also as an engine of economic and social development.

Despite the diversity of administrative systems, traditions and experiences, the Portuguese civil service is based on a legal, institutional and regulatory framework open to citizen participation and the recognition of the broadest rights of citizenship, which makes relations between the public and private sectors of the economy harmonious and profitable.

The strategic objectives of the Portuguese civil service, assigned to it by the programme of the thirteenth Government, are essentially based on a model, a goal and a means.

The model is that of a democratic and participatory public administration independent of parties and the State. This administration cultivates the values of transparency and accessibility and mechanisms of dialogue and social cooperation.

The goal is that of promoting the country's harmonious development, accelerating development at the social, cultural and economic levels and meeting the needs of citizens in general and economic agents in particular by increasing the effectiveness and reducing the size of the State bureaucracy.

The means is provided by an effective, efficient and high-quality public service made up of professional, highly qualified officials.

In the years to come, these strategic objectives will have a varied effect on the modernization of public administration, whatever the dimension of the State involved, whether the State of power, characterized in essence by the exercise of the powers of authority and by the protection and pursuit of the general interest; the ethical State, which guarantees respect for society's fundamental values, fights the abuse of power and strengthens the prestige and neutrality of public functions; the strategic State, aimed at defining the objectives, priorities and ultimate ends of political action; the State as servant — that is, the political community organized with the aim of providing tangible services and utilities to the citizenry; or, lastly, the technical State, which organizes the means, technology and information for supporting the State in its other dimensions.

In ensuring that all these dimensions fall to the State, the aim is not to eliminate any of them, but rather, through them, to seek a place for the State — in other words, for public administration. We must consider the following options: regionalization, achieved through the creation of administrative regions based on the principles of subsidiary relations and partnership by involving public and private entities in the modernization effort; public administration reform, aimed at strengthening the citizenry in its relationship to the State in order to broaden the democratic and participatory model without bureaucracy and independent of parties and the State; the basic role of public services as purveyor of improved governmental action; and public action based on the principle of trust in the citizen, cooperation with social and union forces and the qualification, dignity, motivation and professionalism of human resources.

Here, while never forgetting the complementarity of the State's dimensions, we must stress four aspects that I deem essential as basic guidelines of public administration: the inclusion and complementarity of the private sector, in the perspective of the privatization of public services — or, in other words, in the perspective of non-interference by the State; the strengthening of the fundamental rights of citizens *vis-à-vis* the public administration; the quest for ongoing concertation with our social partners; and cooperation and shared experiences.

As to the question of the privatization of public services, it must be said that the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic has certain characteristics tending towards exclusive State intervention in various areas, such as health, education and social security. This model clearly flows from the ideas that heavily influenced the constitutional lawmakers following the revolution of 25 April 1974. But none of this necessarily leads to the temptation for the State to do everything — nor is that the Government's political orientation — by assuming a genuinely monopolistic attitude towards the satisfaction of collective requirements that leaves no room for private initiative.

On the other hand, if such criteria as the benefits of competitiveness and the subsequent improvement of services rendered, not to mention the need to limit the State budget deficit, tend to help the State to avoid being a material provider of services by leaving the satisfaction of these collective needs to an energized society, it is equally true that the State, at least in its dimension as State of power, enjoys the prerogatives of authority and the ability to impose burdens and restrictions on citizens, which makes any attempt at privatization a somewhat sensitive one.

It would therefore seem clear that the State can usefully allow certain areas of its traditional activity to be taken over by social initiative, while reserving for itself the role of ultimate guarantor of the collective necessities to be satisfied by the private sector. The flip side of this idea is necessarily that the State, by exercising the powers of authority, retains those areas in which it acts in its capacity as power, since it would be difficult for the State to transfer or abjure prerogatives that are inherent to it.

The second important aspect concerns the strengthening of the citizen's rights *vis-à-vis* public administration, which can be translated into two words:

participation and information. Indeed, it is through these two paths, which have become fundamental rights of citizens, that the Portuguese public administration stresses the mechanisms of democratic participation in the development of its activities and, at the same time, opens itself to society and the citizenry so as to provide, on a concrete, daily basis, access to knowledge of its work in an environment of transparency and equality before the law.

The quest for concertation with its social partners is a new way of managing the Portuguese public administration, favouring dialogue and joint action with workers' representatives as a form of commitment and involving all interested parties in the process of modernization.

This year, the Government to which I belong celebrated a historic agreement with all the unions representing public employees. The agreement constitutes the beginning of a weighty negotiation process, from which profound changes are expected to emerge in the Portuguese civil service. It is a fundamental commitment assumed by Mr. Jorge Coelho, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister, whom I have the honour to represent here.

I wish now briefly to stress the importance of cooperation with other peoples. Cooperation and the sharing of experience with other peoples and other administrations, particularly with countries whose official language is Portuguese, are central elements of Portuguese public administration. Thanks to its contacts with different social and cultural realities and with the administrative experiences and traditions that belong to these peoples' heritage, Portugal continues to regard cooperation and the exchange of information and experience as important avenues for its own modernization.

In this respect, the Portuguese public administration is and will always remain open to cooperation, within the scope of its abilities, and to encourage exchanges in order to broaden its modernization effort and thus to contribute to the improvement of its own administration.

Administrative change and improvement, with the citizen as their fixed reference point, allow Governments, in an equitable manner and within the comity of nations, to aspire to the highest quality of democracy, which promotes equal opportunity and solidarity with the neediest and most suffering among us.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Vasyl Rogovy, First Deputy Prime Minister of the Economy of Ukraine.

Mr. Rogovy (Ukraine) (*interpretation from Russian*): The delegation of Ukraine wishes to thank Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for his report on public administration and development and to comment on the practical achievements and recommendations contained therein.

The international dialogue taking place here stresses the need to strengthen our public administration institutions. The development of international cooperation in this important area has particular significance for developing countries and those with economies in transition. As it transforms its socio-economic system, Ukraine is seeking effective ways to modernize its public administr .ion and to adapt it to contemporary conditions.

Thanks to a new course of reform proclaimed by Ukrainian President Kuchma, the Government is moving towards a fundamentally market-based, socially-oriented economy. In the near future, Ukraine will be adopting a new constitution to ensure a legitimate basis for a new, constructive stage in the development of the State, creating stable political conditions for further reform in our public administration functions to promote development.

Public administration in Ukraine seeks to change economic development models; complete the elimination of the old system of centralized resource distribution and the command-based management of our economy; create a viable private sector and develop its effective activities; ensure social support for the process of transition to the market; and ensure sustainable development in harmony with the environment.

The fundamental direction of governmental adjustment aims at liberalization of the economy, radically narrowing the administrative scope for intervention by State bodies in the activities of the economic actors; the process of price control; the establishment of economic ties; macroeconomic stabilization aimed at suppressing inflation; and the increased effectiveness of structural economic reconstruction.

These administrative efforts on the part of the State in this situation seek to ensure comprehensive structural changes in the economic and social spheres. Their goal

is to reorient the economy of the country towards a more effective utilization of resources, thus enhancing export potential and creating new jobs.

The main provisions of our national programme of structural reconstruction envision a modernization of our scientific-technical and technological potential and conditions conducive to its development; overcoming the energy crisis and cutting down on the resources used for production; restructuring and privatizing the largest State enterprises or closing ineffective ones; converting and diversifying the military-industrial enterprises; and alleviating the social consequences of industrial modernization.

One peculiarity of the initial stage of structural reform lies in the fact that it is unfolding in conditions of limited domestic and foreign investment resources and the inadequate development of financial institutions. In this regard, Ukraine is extremely interested in the support of the international community in elaborating plans to restructure business and creating investment projects and investment mechanisms for their study and implementation.

The restructuring and reform of the economy and the need for greater development potential require substantial changes in the investment and financial credit policy of the State. The State will stimulate the joint investment of State and private-sector capital in investment projects. Legal regulation of insurance risks in investment activities is being put in place.

Concrete steps have been taken to attract foreign investments to the Ukrainian economy. The State sector of the economy, despite the increased privatization of industry, growing job opportunities and the availability of fixed capital, still plays an important role in building infrastructure and the economy as a whole.

Reform is being planned in the State sector of the economy for the near future. The few industrial enterprises that involve national security interests will remain in government hands. The State's interests will also be maintained through the participation of its representatives in the work of oversight committees. Designated officials will be mandated to oversee State activities involving joint-stock companies.

A key problem is the privatization of State enterprises and ensuring their effective work, particularly in the first post-privatization period. For this, what is needed are normative legal measures of an informational nature and, most importantly, a change in the psychological climate.

People who have lived most of their lives under a command administrative system and total State control generally tend to lose the sense of empowerment and confidence that hard work and qualifications will lead to success. The State does not have enough professional leaders able to assess the rapidly changing environment in the domestic and foreign markets.

Our President has approved a programme to ensure experienced workers for State service and another to work with the leaders of State enterprises, organizations and institutions. The President has opened the Ukrainian Academy for Public Administration and an institute for improving qualifications.

The human factor is our reference point, on which effective transformation and the pace of development greatly depend. It is the cornerstone of administrative reform, allowing public administration to fulfil its potential and attracting a new generation into public service. Of particular importance to effective public administration is the development of media and telecommunications systems allowing the broad dissemination of information. Necessary and appropriate information is crucial for timely administrative decisions. We would be happy to receive support in working out a strategy for managing our information flows.

In summary, we can say that the political and economic situation in Ukraine at the present time is such that resolving the question of restructuring the functions of the public administration apparatus is a key factor for profound reform in all areas of our society. In this connection, it is hard to overstate the importance of international cooperation in the establishment of an effective public administration mechanism for stabilizing the economic situation and ensuring strong economic growth.

Ukraine is making a great contribution to this development. In particular, with the help of the United Nations Development Programme, a regional seminar will be held next week in our capital on administration, participation and democracy. Our Government believes that practical results will emerge from this measure. We feel that concentrated efforts on consultative services and technical assistance in creating groups on questions of public administration reform and information exchange on this question should be made under United Nations

auspices within existing structures. We would particularly be interested in intensifying the coordinating role of the Economic and Social Council in this important area.

In this context, our delegation supports the European Union's proposal that questions relating to public administration could be considered at one of the next substantive sessions of the Economic and Social Council. We expect that the United Nations and other international organizations will play a greater role in offering assistance in the elaboration and implementation of strategies for public administration, including in the Governments of countries with transition economies.

The Acting President: I call on the Permanent Representative of Bahrain.

Mr. Buallay (Bahrain) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Since this is the first time that I have addressed the Assembly, I should like, on behalf of my delegation, to congratulate you, Sir, on chairing this meeting. I am sure that your experience will enrich our proceedings.

The role of public administration has become very important in driving progress and development as well as in helping peoples achieve sustainable development in the socio-economic and other spheres. Public administration is the force that will propel society towards progress and prosperity through socio-economic reforms, when conditions are propitious and enough resources are available to support it and to develop the abilities of those who are to implement these reforms.

Bahrain has paid particular attention to developing and improving public administration. Since our independence in 1971, the Government has expanded the work of the Departments of State. Convinced of the importance of public administration, the Government has assigned responsibility for its supervision to the Minister of State for the Council of Ministers.

The Council of Civil Service was established in 1982 as a mechanism for supervising the status of the civil service and the development of other Departments of State. Among the Council's most important tasks are: to study policies relating to the recruitment and status of State employees; to evaluate information on remuneration and compensation; to study programmes on the production and effectiveness of the State workforce; to compare and contrast recruitment and employment policies; and to establish direct relationships between Departments of State and other agencies.

Governments play an important role in creating successful public administrations that can help society to achieve lasting social and economic progress. To this end, they must lay the necessary legal foundations, establish regulations and develop administrative ideas and supervisory abilities leading to efficient analysis, planning and evaluation. Governments must also ensure the participation of all in the renaissance of their societies.

The role of women in public administration cannot be over-emphasized, particularly in the area of decision-making. The participation of women in public administration is one of the key elements in achieving a balance between the role of men and women in planning a successful public administration that will serve society. In this context, I should like to note that the State of Bahrain encourages the participation of women in public administration in order to ensure equality between the sexes and in order for women to play their full role in State agencies.

Developing countries that are working to enhance the performance of their public administrations face very difficult circumstances due to the scarcity of their resources. In this respect, we feel that the developed States can play an important role in helping these countries create better public administrations capable of supporting their economic and social development. The developed States can do this by providing financial assistance, experience, training sessions and the necessary technology to train, qualify and improve the efficiency of personnel in order to develop the indigenous capacities of the developing countries.

Developing countries, for their part, should work to create an atmosphere conducive to developing their national capacity, so that they can make full use of the assistance they receive from the developed countries to help their societies achieve sustainable development.

Public administrations in the developing and developed countries are constantly subject to review through research in this area, which can help them to perform better. We should not worry about this improvement, thinking that it will take place at the expense of certain employees, who would lose their jobs because of technological innovations or modernization. Other jobs are available for them, and in any case a balance should be achieved between people and machines. Modernization should not lead to dispensing with the services of certain employers. Technology should help human beings, not cause them more misery.

Another phenomenon that I should mention here is lack of control in public administration. This occurs in both developed and developing countries, but is more prominent in the latter. Public administration can be a refuge — a way of making a living without paying much attention to efficiency or performance, particularly when the State is responsible for everything in the absence of the private sector. Here public administration is bloated and accountability is non-existent, particularly if the administration is massive. In this case we can only think about the resources that the country is wasting. These resources could be invested in projects that would be very beneficial to its citizens. Developing countries are trying to improve their performance in this area with a view to a more positive outcome and to the elimination of negative factors.

The United Nations has a primary role in maintaining international peace and security as well as in other vital areas, particularly sustainable development. In this context, developing countries view as important the role played by the United Nations as an effective instrument in enhancing the efficiency of public administration in these countries. The United Nations should help developing countries improve their public administration and achieve sustainable development through the following steps: by sharing experience and providing financial support; by contributing to the financial assistance offered by countries to develop the private sector; by supporting the efforts of Governments in developing their public administrations through providing experience and technology to developing countries; by urging the specialized agencies to provide experience and consultative services, and to assist in economic and social research; and by helping in the planning of economic and social programmes and in their implementation.

In conclusion, the United Nations, in extending its consultative services and assistance to the developing countries, should take into consideration the disparity in their socio-economic development patterns and in the various stages of their public administration systems.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Zola Skweyiya, Minister for the Public Service and Administration of South Africa.

Mr. Skweyiya (South Africa): The winds of democratization currently blowing throughout the four corners of the world, not only give a glimmer of hope to the peoples of the world, but also pose daunting challenges to the Governments concerned.

We are pleased to note that the Secretary-General's report goes to the heart of these challenges. We enthusiastically welcome the recommendations in the report and wish to congratulate the Secretary-General on a job well done. We believe that public service, as an executive arm of government, should be one of the effective instruments by means of which government should intervene in order to achieve sustainable development in society. It was in realization of this that the Pan-African Conference adopted the Tangier Declaration in Morocco in 1994. Indeed, it is for this reason that we consider this fiftieth resumed session an important forum for the enhancement of the understanding of public administration in the development process.

May we also state at the outset that we regard the resumed session not just as an opportunity to share with others — and in so doing, hopefully, to provide motivation, insight and understanding to those engaged in similar activities — but also as a means of increasing our knowledge and heightening our awareness on matters that may, over time, prove critical to the success of our initiatives.

In South Africa we have achieved much in a relatively short time, particularly through the establishment of a stable democracy, the extension of democracy to large parts of local government, the ending of discrimination in Government programmes and improving services to the underprivileged majority of South Africans, improving the economy of the country, and by instilling a new patriotism that promotes national reconciliation and reconstruction.

Upon assuming office, the new Government was confronted with the colossal task of restructuring and reforming an inherited apartheid public service characterized by a lack of representativeness, legitimacy, service delivery, accountability and transparency; centralized control and top-down management; an absence of effective management information; low productivity; adversarial labour relations; and a lack of professional work ethics.

Before the coming into operation of the 1993 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, after our country's first truly democratic elections, on 27 April 1994, South Africa was effectively divided into 11 separate geographical entities, each with its own constitution, legislation and administrative system. The public services of these former entities consisted of 176

departments, with a total personnel complement of roughly 1.25 million people. The various public services differed in numerous respects, because the autonomous nature of the 11 former constitutional entities enabled each of them to develop according to its particular needs, preferences and circumstances, without taking national interests into account.

However, the Constitution's requirement of, *inter alia*, a single, streamlined, efficient and transparent public service necessitated the amalgamation of the 11 former public services into a single, unified public service governed by uniform laws, policies and other prescripts; the reallocation or reassignment of the administration of more than 1,000 laws; and the reallocation of resources to institutions that have new functional and geographic jurisdictions and new priorities.

Although the rationalization process has not yet been fully completed, the most important actions, such as organizational rationalization, have for the most part been finalized, and others will continue to be pursued vigorously, with the object of achieving full transformation within the shortest practicable time-frame.

The physical rationalization of the public service into a unified body to perform its administrative functions has also largely been completed. However, much needs to be done in transforming the functioning, mind-set and ethos of the public service in order to achieve an efficient and effective agency for service delivery, as required by our Government's reconstruction and development programme.

While it has been recognized that a comprehensive transformation of the public service is required, it is vital that such a transformation process be guided by a clear vision. This vision for the public service has been identified as one that continuously seeks to improve the lives of the people of South Africa.

In pursuit of this vision, the Government sees as its mission the creation of a people-centred and people-driven public service that is characterized by equity, quality, timeliness and a strong code of ethics.

The strategic framework for change that is therefore pursued, in addition to the rationalization imperatives already referred to, entails the following.

A leaner and more cost-effective public service is to be created by means of right-sizing, adjusting remuneration structures, early retirement, natural attrition, contracting out services through partnerships where the need can be justified and redeployment and retraining.

Institution-building and management improvement are to be carried out with the objective of empowering and motivating managers to be leaders, and individual public servants to work productively and with initiative. The strategies to be followed are the devolution of managerial responsibility and accountability; the introduction of new and more participatory organizational structures; human-resource development; and the introduction of management-information systems.

Representativeness and affirmative action are to be accomplished by outlawing discrimination; reforming recruitment, selection, employment and promotion practices; utilizing time-frames; proclaiming legislation that will be designed to ensure its active and correct implementation; and inculcating attitudinal changes.

Public-service delivery is to be transformed by making it more effective in order to meet the basic needs of the majority of the population, especially those of the large number who live below the poverty line. Key departments such as health, education and welfare are already addressing certain major social problems.

Accountability and transparency are to be enhanced by ensuring that built-in mechanisms for regulating internal accountability are established in every Government department and provincial administration, which promotes a participatory approach to decision-making. External accountability will also be ensured by promoting public participation in influencing and evaluating policy, both indirectly, through elected parliamentary representatives and statutory agencies, and directly, through the Public Sector Forum.

As concerns employment conditions and labour relations, pay and employment conditions will be improved by means of adequate minimum wages, equal pay for equal work, reduction in differentials, the development of appropriate career paths, a reduction in the number of grades and improved conditions for women and people with disabilities. As regards labour relations, emphasis will be put on a move towards a more consensual and less confrontational model of collective bargaining and on effective negotiating structures and practices, in order to minimize the possible disruption of public services by labour unrest. Even on matters previously regarded as so-called management

prerogatives, the move is towards co-determination and consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders.

A professional service ethos is to be promoted to encourage a highly motivated public service with strong morale and a sense of mission, by utilizing a code of conduct and a systematic programme to prevent corruption.

In human resource development and training, it is recognized that the effective mobilization, development and utilization of human-resource capacity will be critical for the success of institution-building and management programmes, as well as for the success of the transformation process more generally.

The challenge to transform the public service and to deliver high-quality services in the new South Africa is being experienced at all levels. No longer will the old, traditional bureaucratic approaches that applied in the apartheid public service hold sway. We are determined to get members of the public service to focus on customer care and service delivery and to remember that they are servants, and not masters, of the public. Managing the change has been a daunting challenge, and we have tried our best to foster a collective responsibility to drive the transformation.

May I take this opportunity to thank, first of all, the international community in general for the assistance it gave us, the South Africans as a whole, in our struggle against apartheid, but more importantly, those countries that are helping us in this process of transforming the South African public service. We hope that we will be able to work with the international community in changing and entrenching democracy within South Africa, specifically through the democratization and reform of our public service.

The Acting President: I call on His Excellency The Honourable Chief Ayo Ogunlade, Minister of National Planning of Nigeria.

Chief Ogunlade (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation welcomes the opportunity to participate in the debate on the question of public administration and development at this resumed session of the Assembly, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/136 of 19 December 1994. In this context, we wish to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/50/847 of 8 March 1996.

Similarly, we wish to congratulate the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance for their report. We consider the two reports not only timely but also substantive contributions to the debate.

At the outset, it is my delegation's considered view that the primary responsibility for reforming or improving the public sector rests with national Governments. Consequently, the whole question of public administration and development must be country-specific and must be seen in the context of local conditions and history. None the less, we recognize that in recent years global development strategies and initiatives have been influenced by factors that include demand for increased participation by the population in governance, increased economic interdependence and emphasis on social justice.

It is becoming increasingly clear that many countries face the obligation of seeking to redefine the role of government in the pursuit of national development and sustained economic growth. Among the challenges are the questions of efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of government. In Africa, where the private sector is virtually non-existent or ill-defined, Governments have recognized the need to strengthen the public sector through institutional restructuring, including civil-service reforms and capacity-building.

Nigeria in the 1980s embarked on civil-service reforms. Our Head of State, in his 1996 budget statement, stressed the need to undertake reforms in the Nigerian civil service as an approach to enhanced performance, efficiency and accountability within the public sector. The net effect of this endeavour has been the establishment of a manageable civil service with an inbuilt mechanism for training and capacity-building. Resulting from this has been the continuing desire to create an enabling environment for the private sector to derive impulse and orientation from the public sector, so that, in turn, both can serve complementary roles. In the process, our new national investment policy allows foreign investors to participate in the Nigerian economy, assured of an enabling environment facilitated by the introduction of the requisite fiscal and macro-economic measures.

For most developing countries, technical assistance represents a development resource additional to national resources and capacity. In this connection, it is appropriate to recall that General Assembly resolution 44/211 of December 1989 enjoins nationals of countries to design, formulate, implement and monitor technical-

assistance programmes. The point that is being made here, therefore, is that States receiving technical assistance should not be relieved of the obligation and the responsibility to determine their development programmes, even with external assistance. We believe, therefore, that donor countries have an obligation to refrain from seeking to impose their conditionalities and methods of programme identification and implementation on developing countries.

Beginning with the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992; the World Conference on Human Rights, in Vienna in 1993; the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, in September 1994; the World Summit for Social Development, held in 1995 in Copenhagen; and the Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing in September 1995, the issue of development has come to the forefront as the most important challenge facing the human race. National Governments and, indeed, the international community must find ways and means to eliminate poverty, promote social justice, protect the environment and promote good governance. In this connection, Nigeria welcomes and supports the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development.

In the same vein, we share the vision expressed by the Secretary-General, in an Agenda for Peace, that there can be no development without a peaceful environment. It is for this reason that the Nigerian Government has taken the necessary steps to put in place institutions and mechanisms that are home-grown in support of the democratic process, in order to create an enabling environment for the promotion of people-centred development.

In conclusion, the Nigerian delegation hopes that the Member States of this world Organization will see their way clear to revitalize their roles and provide assistance, as necessary, to national Governments in the area of public administration and development.

The Acting President: I call on His Excellency Mr. A. H. N. Shabangu, Minister for Labour and Public Service of Swaziland.

Mr. Shabangu (Swaziland): Allow me at the outset, on behalf of my delegation, to express our warm congratulations to Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral his election as President of this body. We are confident that his rich wisdom and long experience will benefit this session in the realization of its noble goals. To this end I pledge the full support and cooperation of my delegation. We would also like to pay tribute to his predecessor for a very successful presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

I feel greatly honoured to be given this opportunity to highlight for this body issues relating to public administration and development management in the Kingdom of Swaziland.

The Kingdom of Swaziland, being a developing country, has to cope with internal factors, such as the increasing demand for services, as well as external factors, such as the changing political climate in southern Africa. The regional and world recessions have also had an adverse impact on the performance of our economy.

Recognizing the increasingly competitive environment, in which it is becoming harder and harder to secure development financing, and realizing also that there is a growing national budget deficit, the Kingdom of Swaziland has embarked on the formulation of a National Development Strategy, which is spearheaded by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. This strategy is aimed at setting and directing Swaziland's development options for the coming 20 to 30 years.

May I briefly reflect on the specific objectives of the National Development Strategy in Swaziland, which are as follows: first, to explore the options for economic and social development in Swaziland, taking into account the expected macroeconomic situation, the need to balance competing priorities and likely resource constraints, and the key role played by the private sector in Swaziland's economy; secondly, to assess the impact of the different options on Government revenue, expenditures and manpower requirements; thirdly, to determine an appropriate role for the public sector — including public enterprises — both for cross- sectoral issues and within each sector, clearly delineating its responsibilities for direct action, regulation and facilitation; and, fourthly, to propose a framework of policy measures and public-investment criteria for each of the main sectors of the economy.

To complement the National Development Strategy, the Swaziland Government inaugurated an internally driven adjustment programme, called the Public Sector Management Programme, in June 1995. This programme aims to determine an appropriate role for the public sector in the country's pursuit of economic growth and development.

The main objectives of this programme include the following: first, to ensure that public expenditure is properly targeted at national development objectives; second, to ensure that public expenditure achieves the set objectives in an efficient manner; third, to ensure that the aggregate level of recurrent expenditure is sustainable in view of expected recurrent revenues; fourth, to ensure that tax levels do not increase to disincentive rates; fifth, to ensure that the taxation structure provides adequate incentives to investors; sixth, to streamline the structure, organization and operations of the public service to ensure value for money; and, seventh, to significantly increase the productivity and efficiency of the public service through institutional strengthening and capacity-building.

The Public Sector Management Programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Public Service, as the Ministry responsible for public-service management. It is to be headed by the National Director, to whom all the Ministerial teams report. The Minister for Labour and Public Service reports all matters pertaining to the programme to the Cabinet through a Cabinet subcommittee. This is intended to ensure that there is enough political commitment at the highest level of Government and thus to secure the necessary political will to drive the programme. This programme is at a stage of implementation at which Government structures are conducting an introspection exercise to see how the realization of its objectives can be facilitated.

I am persuaded to indicate that in recognition of the increasing demand for participation and transparency in both the National Development Strategy and the Public Sector Management Programme, all the stakeholders are directly involved. The public service, with its two workers' organizations — the Swaziland National Association of Civil Servants and the Swaziland National Association of Teachers — are active participants in deciding the future of Swaziland. The same is true of the two workers' federations in the private sector, represented by the Swaziland Federation of Labour and the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions. Employers' organizations, such as the Federation of Swaziland Employers and the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, are also major contributors to these efforts.

Swaziland, like all developing countries, is experiencing growing unemployment, which presents difficult challenges to all those whose preoccupation is to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development by facilitating and creating a conducive environment for good public administration and effective development management.

Swaziland hopes that with these initiatives, centred on the National Development Strategy and the Public Sector Management Programme, the topical issues that it has identified concerning public administration and development management will be addressed.

We would be remiss if we did not express our deep appreciation to His Excellency the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his excellent report presented to us in document A/50/847 and its annexes. In reviewing the report of the Secretary-General, I was encouraged to note the recommendations for national Governments on public administration and development and the United Nations response to these recommendations. I wish to confirm that, although His Majesty's Government has initiated actions in some of the areas identified in the report, we will continue to appeal to the United Nations for assistance in areas such as development of policy, strategic plans and performance improvement indicators; effective investment in human resources through focusing on upgrading the capacity of national training institutions; assessment of privatization policies; and providing an enabling environment for economic development.

May I place on record Swaziland's concurrence with the recommendations pertaining to the role of the United Nations organs in coordinating public administration and development. My delegation reaffirms that the recommendations on the revitalization of the role of the United Nations as a clearing-house, the translation of the goals and recommendations of global conferences into detailed programmes of implementation, the development of a healthy private sector, the development of technical and analytical skills, and assistance in all phases of the restoration and restructuring of public administration institutions form a firm basis for our future cooperation with the United Nations.

In conclusion, my delegation supports all efforts to improve public administration and development and will fully cooperate with other delegations in ensuring that they are fully considered and, where appropriate, adopted.

The Acting President: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Raquel Hernández, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Finance and Prices, of Cuba.

Ms. Hernández Herrera (Cuba) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The impact of recent international developments and the new challenges that the international economy must face leave no doubt as to the need for competent public administration in order to achieve sustainable development. Nor is there any doubt that the United Nations, with its programme in public administration and finance, can support national Governments in their objective: more effective and efficient systems.

My country wishes to contribute to the achievement of the Assembly's objectives by presenting its own experiences in the area of public administration and development.

The disappearance of the European socialist bloc and the tightening of the economic blockade that, has been imposed on Cuba by the United States for more than 30 years were the main factors pushing the Cuban economy into one of the deepest crises in its history, in particularly changing and adverse circumstances. The decline in gross domestic product of almost 35 per cent between 1989 and 1993 was due to the lack of access to medium- and long-term financing resources, the drastic reduction of import capacity by 75 per cent, the loss of traditional international markets — since trade with the socialist bloc accounted for 85 per cent of our foreign trade — and the deterioration of exchange rates, stemming primarily from a drop of almost 35 per cent in the export price of sugar.

The Government of the Republic of Cuba decided that in order to deal with the impact of the crisis it was necessary to activate a programme of reforms that would allow the economy to recover, preserve the achievements obtained in the fields of health, education, social security and welfare, distribute as equitably as possible the inevitable social costs and, at the same time, create the necessary conditions to reinsert the country into the world economy.

The Government's leadership, and its commitment to change, transparent implementation and the participation of all socio-economic sectors in the planning and implementation of our programmes have been essential aspects of the reform process undertaken by the Cuban public administration.

Social policy, which provides for free education and health care for the entire population, regardless of income level, race, religion or political ideology, has been at the centre of the Government's strategy. In spite of its economic difficulties, Cuba has devoted to those activities the resources necessary for the maintenance of this policy, and has not closed down schools, hospitals, senior-citizen homes or day-care centres during all these years of economic difficulty.

Comprehensiveness in the Cuban social security system is another major tenet of public administration in the area of social policy.

Between 1989 and 1993, years of profound economic crisis, the part of the State budget for social security services increased by 33 per cent, and by 1993 10 per cent of the gross domestic product went towards ensuring that not one citizen failed to collect his retirement benefits on time, and that all those who, having reached the stipulated retirement age, voluntarily requested retirement would have the same right and access to benefits.

The results of the social policy we have maintained can be seen in such achievements as our infant mortality rate of 9.9 per 1,000 live births and a life expectancy at birth of 74.7 years. These figures are comparable to those of the most developed countries of the world.

As regards employment programmes, the Cuban public administration has tried to combine the necessary streamlining of the labour force with the development of other, alternative sources of income, primarily by increasing non-State activities and developing new branches of the economy. The State provides a temporary allowance to persons who do not succeed in being reabsorbed into the new sectors. At the same time, enterprises have been induced to carry out the economic adjustment process gradually, thus avoiding massive lay-offs.

One of the main structural changes promoted by reform in Cuba is the increased participation of the non-State sector in the economy. The most important change has occurred in the agricultural sector: more than 42 per cent of the arable land owned by the State was handed over to cooperatives, families and individuals. The non-State sector now holds 67.3 per cent of all land, as compared to the 24.8 per cent it previously held, and 70 per cent of all workers in the agricultural labour force work in the non-State sector.

Self-employment grew to more than 200,000 persons, more than 15 times the number before these changes took place. This process of change was reinforced by the establishment of markets for

agricultural products and industrial goods, where producers can sell their merchandise at free market prices.

The opening up to foreign investment has also supported the structural changes in the economy. Our foreign-investment law number 77, adopted in 1995, opened almost all branches of the economy to foreign investment and authorized up to 100 per cent of foreign capital in investments. At the end of 1995 there were 230 economic partnership projects involving foreign capital, with an investment commitment of $2.1 billion. Foreign investment is already considerable in the industries of tourism, mining — mostly nickel — oil and telecommunications.

The essential factor in the changes to the production framework has been the Cuban public administration's mobilization of domestic resources towards investment projects that generate growth in marketable services and that have a significant impact on exports and on the replacement of imports. This has allowed for the development of new branches of the economy such as tourism, biotechnology and the pharmaceutical industry.

The Cuban public administration has also invested large amounts of resources in infrastructure projects, such as those in the areas of transportation, energy, telecommunications, water and sanitation, while regarding provision of primary services to society, combined with technological potential, as the basic premise for social development and the efficiency of the public sector.

The decentralization of foreign trade and the elimination of State monopolies have been of vital importance in the process of integrating the Cuban economy into the international marketplace. More than 250 entities — compared to 50 previously — have the necessary legal capacity to carry out operations of this nature. Foreign businesses represented in the country rose to more than 660 by the end of 1995, and at present relations are maintained with over 2,500 firms from some 100 countries.

The circulation of freely convertible hard currency in the domestic market was permitted in order to take advantage of the potential of the growing financial resources generated by the development of the tourism sector, of the increasing number of foreign firms with offices in our country and of the Cuban community abroad. The circulation of two forms of hard currency favoured the entry of foreign currency into the country, to the benefit of the financial management of Cuban public administration.

In December 1994 the National Bank of Cuba issued the convertible Cuban peso, valued at one United States dollar, in order to re-establish progressively the role played by the national currency. In 1995, in support of this objective, we officially authorized the establishment of a network of money-exchange offices whose rates are in accordance with those dictated by the informal economy.

In the financial sector, banking activity in Cuba has begun a restructuring process that involves segregating the functions of the central bank from those of the commercial bank, and establishing a new banking system that can respond to present economic requirements. Ten foreign banks have already opened their offices in Cuba.

The insurance sector is undergoing an accelerated process of modernization in order to satisfy the demands of a market that is radically different from the one that existed before reform.

The number of trading companies acting as financial mediators, either in association with entrepreneurial groups or as independent entities, is also on the rise. All this contributes to the integration of the business network of a national financial system.

While increasing the efficiency of financial management, the Cuban public administration has had to re-establish domestic financial equilibrium and ensure an adequate balance between development costs and fixed costs.

As a result of the crisis, in 1993 the Cuban economy reached the point of dangerous imbalance in internal finances. After long public consultations, the Cuban public administration implemented a series of measures aimed at resolving the internal financial crisis. During the first stage those measures were increases in the prices of non-goods; in fixed tariffs, for the sake of cost-effectiveness, and in prices intended to save scarce resources, and the elimination of gratuities not related to basic social activities.

In 1994 a new taxation system was established in order to strengthen the basis for the collection of public revenues, decrease cash surpluses accumulated by the population and bring about a more equitable distribution of wealth.

As to financial management, the Cuban public administration has played particular attention to limiting

public expenditures for paying State enterprises subsidies for losses incurred. Therefore, some enterprises have become shareholder companies and others have imposed self-financing regimes. In both cases, an attempt has been made to separate property from management, while other enterprises had rigorous budgets of expenditures imposed upon them. Consequently, the budgetary costs of subsidies paid to State enterprises for losses incurred were reduced by 67 per cent between 1993 and 1995.

The combined impact of these measures led to a reduction of the fiscal deficit. In just two years it decreased from 33 per cent of the gross domestic product to 3.6 per cent. Monetary liquidity decreased by 25 per cent in 18 months, and the informal-economy value of the national currency decreased from 150 pesos to the United States dollar to 21 pesos.

The changes in the functions of Cuban public administration and the need to make it work more flexibly, effectively and efficiently made it necessary to readjust the State sector. During the initial stage, in a streamlining process, the number of central-administration organs was reduced from 50 to 32, either through mergers or abolition.

In the business sector the flow of production and services is being reorganized preserving activity wherever economically justifiable. This involves adapting the size of our production and service enterprises and readjusting capacities in accordance with available production resources in order to achieve the required levels of efficiency.

The growing decentralization of business management and the diversification of the types of property involved in the Cuban economy require the application of credit and fiscal policies as instruments of the macro-economic management of State activities. In this way financial planning and the measurement of economic activity on the basis of results have replaced the system of material balances and of centralized allocation of resources, which characterized the Cuban management system of the past.

In order to strengthen the control function of Cuban public administration new organizational structures were set up. These include the National Auditing Office, which sets standards and ensures compliance with the law, and the National Taxation Administration, which organizes the collection and monitoring of taxes.

Corruption, a phenomenon that grows and erodes public administration, is a crime punishable under the Cuban penal code, thus requiring civil responsibility.

The results of the strategy adopted have proved to be valuable. In 1994, the economic decline was successfully arrested, and the economy grew by 0.7 per cent. Last year the gross domestic product increased by 2.5 per cent, and a slight recovery in the Cuban economy began. It is expected that in 1996 the economy will grow by more than 5 per cent, that investments will increase by 27 per cent and that the budgetary deficit will be reduced to less than 3 per cent.

In general, it can be said that the reforms adopted over a period of barely two and a half years have allowed the gradual and orderly introduction of market mechanisms, with social consensus, in a planned economy, which has begun a process of adaptation to new circumstances without losing our most essential features.

We still have a complicated and difficult road to travel in order to establish the kind of public administration that my people deserve. Domestically, this is because we started from very depressed economic levels, so the increases we have been able to attain have served only to diminish the cumulative effects of negative growth and have not yet been sufficient to satisfy the needs of the country. Internationally, this is because of the uncertainty of the changing circumstances, the difficulty of access to the advances of the technological and computer revolutions and the further deterioration of the environment.

Cuba must also face the brutal and inhuman blockade originally decreed by the Government of the United States in 1962, which has been tightened since the adoption, in 1992, of the so-called Cuban Democracy Act — the Torricelli law — and, more recently, of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, known as the Helms-Burton law.

This new United States legislative creation is intended to destabilize the Government of Cuba, precisely by suffocating the economy, and this is happening in a world that proclaims its global and interdependent character. The Helms-Burton law is in open contradiction not only to the Charter of the United Nations, but also to the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization. These documents announced the beginning

of a new era of international economic cooperation in an ever-opening commercial system.

This law, as other countries have declared, is an aggression against the international community as a whole and constitutes a dangerous experiment in world Government against which Cuba has given timely warning. Undoubtedly, the increased hostility against my country, as seen in such legislation, continues to be a major obstacle to development and to the work of national public administration.

The report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/50/847 presents a set of interesting recommendations that deserve consideration by the General Assembly. Cuba supports all genuine efforts by the United Nations to improve its contribution in the areas of exchange of information and technical assistance in the field of public administration. This involves not only the strengthening of capacity, but also new resources to revitalize programmes already under way. However, any attempt to confuse this function with that of transforming the United Nations into a centre for and monitoring and investigating the policies and management of national public systems would be counterproductive and illegitimate.

Management and administration practices can be enriched through the exchange of diverse experiences emerging from the specific circumstances of each country, and not through the presumption that universal models can be applied in order to simplify or deny the peculiarities of different administrative systems that have been shaped by the historic conditions, needs and historical traditions of each country.

It is in this spirit that my delegation will participate in the work of this resumed session of the General Assembly.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Roger Wilson, Head, Government and Institutions Department, Overseas Development Administration of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Wilson (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes this special session because it rightly combines the theme of reforming public administration with the development process. This is proving one of the key relationships on the development agenda in the 1990s.

In the United Kingdom, we have pursued the reform of public administration within our own country with conviction. We regard the task of increasing the efficiency and accountability of public services as an integral part of the structural changes which are improving the competitive edge of our economy.

But we also have a tradition of setting public administration firmly in the context of good government. This is not only because public administration is likely to be more competent if it is accountable and more effective if it serves a legitimate Government and operates within the rule of law. It is also because we are convinced that our citizens are entitled to effective ways of expressing their consent in their Government and in their country's development; to have their lives, property and freedoms protected under the law; to be able to hold their Government to account for the use of resources and for its performance; and to expect the system of public administration to serve them in accordance with these rights and to do so effectively and efficiently.

Let me attempt to encapsulate how the British Government has addressed these issues, especially the issues of accountability and competence, in recent years.

The starting point for the British Government has been to redefine the tasks of Government by asking certain key questions.

First, does every service and task need to be done, or could some of the resources be used where they are need more, or could the cost to the taxpayer avoided altogether?

Secondly, if the activity must be carried out, does it need to be done in the public sector? Since 1979, the British Government has pursued a consistent policy of transferring organizations which no longer need to be owned by Government to the private sector. A substantial proportion of the former public sector now operates more efficiently in the private sector, with higher levels of investment, at lower cost to the consumer and with improved standards of service.

Thirdly, where Government needs to be responsible for an activity, does the Government have to carry out the task itself? Well over £1 billion worth of government services have been examined under the Competing for Quality programme. In my own department, the Overseas Development Administration, functions involving over 50 per cent of posts have been tested against the market, often by open tenders.

For those jobs which must be carried out in government, we have asked whether the organization is properly organized for the task. A major theme within the British Civil Service has, therefore, been the focus on performance.

In order to focus government on the job to be done and to encourage change, executive responsibilities have been delegated from Government departments and given to smaller, discrete management units with clear executive responsibilities, against which performance can more easily be measured and to which authority for change can be delegated. Over a hundred such agencies have been created, employing over 70 per cent of civil servants.

In order to provide incentives to the individual, pay and other rewards throughout the public sector are related to individual or group performance, as well as to what is needed to recruit and retain staff. Pay increases in the civil service have been financed for the past four years by increased efficiency, often through reducing numbers of employees.

In order to ensure value for money in public expenditure, a tight control is maintained over costs within government departments. All departments operate continuous efficiency programmes. Individual projects within this programme have yielded savings of up to 40 per cent in the Overseas Development Administration.

A further and central strategy has been a determination to put users first. This is embodied in the Citizen's Charter. The principles of the Charter are: the publication of standards of service; the provision of information on performance and greater openness on all matters relevant to the public's interests; courtesy and helpfulness in dealing with the public; and a willingness to put things right when they go wrong.

This has been the United Kingdom's path to a more accountable and competent public service. Quite how the principles of good government — that is, competence, accountability, legitimacy, the rule of law and respect for human rights — are worked out in practice is for each country to decide. However, we are in no doubt that these principles represent fundamental, universal and instinctive human values. They are reflected in the international covenants to which most countries are parties.

Although the sovereignty of countries remains an undisputed principle, the fact is that our standards of governance are no longer matters of purely internal concern. We now live in a closely interdependent world, so that we are unavoidably reliant, in some measure, on each other's public administration. People and their values, trade and prosperity, disease and environmental impacts move across international boundaries, and our Governments can affect this for better or worse.

Taxpayers in donor countries certainly have strong views on this subject. The British public has shown that it has a commitment to development, but it approaches these matters with a robust common sense. The administration of the British aid programme has for long been subject to close scrutiny to ensure its integrity and efficiency. There is now increasing scrutiny in donor countries of the use which recipient countries make of aid resources, and in some cases there is a sense of disillusionment where recipient Governments and institutions seem unwilling or unable to address issues of competence, efficiency and accountability. Good governance has become a key issue as donor Governments are under increasing pressure to justify their aid programmes to their Parliaments and electorates.

Of course, there are courageous leaders undertaking difficult economic and political transformation without seeking personal gain. These are the countries we prefer to help, and the number of invitations to assist is growing. We increased by a third the number of new good-government project commitments in 1994-95 to 180. Fifteen per cent of our bilateral aid supports good-government activities.

But these are input measures, and we were reminded by our Dutch colleague of the need for output measures. However, even by those measures, the outlook is encouraging. We are in the midst of growing democracy in Latin America, in Eastern Europe, in Asia and in Africa. No fewer than 69 nations have shifted to a multi-party system in the last 10 years. To convert this transition into genuine democracy and good government will be a massive challenge for politicians, for their civil service and peoples. We have heard at this session many inspiring reports of their determination and commitment.

For the future, what are other key issues we need to address?

Could we agree that good government means helping people take greater control over their lives and improving their well-being, as they define it? At the moment the prospects of achieving this are not good; those sections of society which have the greatest need

also have the least political power. To address this we have adopted new approaches in our aid programme, such as the participatory management of resources, building on poor people's own knowledge and skills, and supporting education designed specifically to reach poor people.

Women's empowerment is central to this issue. Our agenda was set in the Beijing Declaration at the conclusion of the Fourth World Conference on Women, when it said:

> "Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace". *(A/CONF.177/20, annex I, para. 13).*

A second issue on which we should also be able to agree is that we need to give increasing attention to the role of governance in the management of conflict, as well as in post-conflict reconstruction. There is no need to remind this forum of the growing urgency of this subject, which arises not only from the number of major conflicts, but also from the increasing proportion of civilian casualties and the numbers of refugees. Our understanding of how best to help States emerging from conflict to restore peace and essential public services is likely to be sorely tested.

A third issue for our future agenda is how Governments can cooperate most effectively to address issues of good government. Ideally, these arrangements will be more open and participatory, involving also elements of civil society.

How should these matters and the reports of the Secretary- General and the Group of Experts be followed up? We should recognize that the primary responsibility for good Government and public administration lies with Member States of the United Nations system, and that the task of offering support for reform is shared between donor Governments — those Governments like Malaysia and Tunisia, that have offered to exchange information — international institutions and the United Nations system.

In considering the United Nations system's role in this, it is reasonable to require it to set an example of effective administration and the efficient use of resources. We should like to see it ask some fundamental questions about how to optimize its role and whether its structures are presently designed to achieve its objectives effectively and efficiently.

In addressing these questions, we hope that the United Nations system will bear in mind its present financial climate; that it will base its approach on existing institutions as proposed by the Presidency of the European Union; and that it will consider carefully the reflections in the Netherlands statement about the strengths of the United Nations Development Programme in operational areas.

As many Member States know, answering these sorts of questions is always difficult, sometimes painful but eventually worthwhile.

The Acting President: I call now on Mr. Udol Boonprakob, Secretary-General, Office of the Civil Service Commission of Thailand.

Mr. Boonprakob (Thailand): For over 700 years of our independence, Thailand has enjoyed a tradition of strong bureaucracy, so strong that the country's political system was called a "bureaucratic polity". It is an undeniable fact that Thai bureaucracy is a key element for continuing national social and economic development in the face of colonial threats, political instability, external power encroachment and public turmoil. This is reflected in the continual economic growth of 7 per cent to 8 per cent in the last decade. Evidently, support from the public sector plays a significant part in strengthening the private sector and bringing it to the forefront.

In a globalized society, rapid socio-economic and technological changes, rising demands for quality services, the need for higher international competitiveness, and increasing domestic and external pressures have all put the public sector to a real and dangerous test. Within the present structural and working context, this challenge has pushed the public service to its limit.

Should the Thai public service continue to function within its traditional, bureaucratic mode of operation, it will no longer be able to perform the kind of functions required of modern and efficient public management. The modern public service is expected to be more accountable, customer-focused, just and adjustable to change, and to serve efficiently as a reliable arm of a democratic Government without any inclination towards any political party.

Yet there are certain constraints which must be eradicated or weakened before an expected vision of the public service can be realized. The civil service is still a

large, cumbersome public machinery. Several new agencies are created each year, while its civilian workforce has already passed the 1.5 million mark. Many agencies are performing unnecessary and redundant tasks, often overlapping those of other agencies. The public service functions within a set of complicated, intertwining and often out-of-date rules and regulations. The situation becomes more unsatisfactory combined with unnecessary work procedures. As the private sector prospers, the civil service suffers from the loss of its competent mid-level technocrats and professionals, particularly in the areas of science and technology. Many of those who remain adopt conservative attitudes, a resistance to change, a feudalistic approach to their clients and a lack of clear vision. Senior executive officers work within the constraints of political interference, rigid budgetary and financial practices and uncompromising rules and regulations. Such constraints clearly discourage many chief executive officers from taking innovative actions and reform efforts.

Those constraints thus become persistent targets for reform. Thai Governments have tried various strategies, such as setting up reform committees, empowering the Civil Service Commission to initiate reforms, giving management reform priority in the national development agenda or pinpointing administrative reform aspects in Government public policy.

Though the public continues to complain about malpractice, substandard and occasionally discriminatory services, as well as slow, irresponsive bureaucratic practices, some progress has been pushed through. I shall give some examples beginning with manpower control. Various measures are used to reduce the size of the Thai civil service. From a growth of 3 per cent to 5 per cent each year during the past decade, the Government now estimates such growth to be less than 2 per cent in 1995.

My next example is manpower development. Senior executives and managers are required to attend training sessions organized by the Civil Service Commission and other agencies as part of their career promotion.

I turn to information technology and modern office equipment. Modern information technology and office equipment are increasingly being supplied to public agencies, and staffs are becoming more familiarized with them.

My next example is outsourcing. More and more jobs are now privatized or commissioned out to the private sector.

Another example is incentives. While compensation for civil servants is still lower than that in the market, the gap is getting smaller. In 1992, the Government made a salary adjustment which resulted in an increase of about 23 per cent for civil servants. Professionals, especially in the areas of science and technology, and academics also received extra pay beyond their regular salary. My final example is decentralization. More and more discretion is given to the counter offices and operation agencies.

Beyond those efforts, other reform activities are under way.

First, with regard to the re-engineering programme for selected agencies, starting in 1996, the pilot agencies involved in this programme — the Revenue Department and the Social Security Department, for example — will enjoy a relaxation of rules and other personnel and financial constraints.

Secondly, reform research focusing on manpower, budgetary and financial processes, procurement, information technology, deregulation, structure and 'encies' functions, aims to reduce some of the basic constraints for effective civil service and to pave the way for future planning and strategy.

Thirdly, research on structural adjustment, which will be completed in 1996, will lead the way to major structural change in public organizations' power and their roles.

The reform endeavour in Thailand over the past five years can be summed up as follows: 1992, changing the role of the Government; 1993, streamlining the bureaucracy; 1994, compensation reform; 1995, performance improvement; 1996, public sector re-engineering.

All these efforts should lead to: a bureaucracy of the proper size, focusing on roles and functions most needed by society; public learning organizations which are readily adjustable to change; a competent, accountable, customer-concerned and confident public service; a dependable public service which is accepted by all sides; and an army of knowledgeable, efficient and outward-looking personnel who are responsive to the needs of society and their customers.

All this having been said, Thailand still needs a major, more systematic and comprehensive reform in order to raise the performance and service standards of

its civil service. Such a reform programme requires mutual understanding, participation and support from all the parties involved, be they politicians, civil servants, the mass media or the public at large.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Soedjadi Jatnodiprodjo, Expert at the National Institute of Administration of Indonesia.

Mr. Jatnodiprodjo (Indonesia): Let me first, on behalf of the Indonesian delegation, express our deep appreciation to the President for convening this resumed session of the General Assembly to focus on the timely and important theme of public administration and development. I should also like to sincerely thank the Secretary-General for opening these historic meetings and for his informative and cogent words of encouragement. Let me also express our deep appreciation to the United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services and to the Group of Experts, whose invaluable contribution has laid the necessary groundwork for the success of our deliberations.

My delegation totally agrees with the view that the item before us, public administration and development, is of timely and central importance to Member States. Its urgency and timeliness stem from various sources. I would like to briefly focus on two: globalization and the changing development paradigm.

The world today is essentially characterized by transformation and change, driven primarily by globalization and the liberalization of trade and investment. Other developments, such as the growing recognition of the need for sustainability, interdependence, regionalization and the increasing disengagement of the State from national economies, have also greatly contributed towards defining the newly emerging order. There is no denying that these trends have spawned an entirely new level of complexity, particularly for Government decision makers and management.

Secondly, and equally important, there has been over the past decade a steady evolution of the concept of development. This has been mainly characterized by an increased emphasis on people-centred development and the free enterprise system. The evolution of the new consensus on development has been given further definition and articulation by a continuum of major United Nations conferences in the 1990s. As a result, we have collectively come to recognize five enabling conditions for development, which should be addressed in an integrated manner. These include the economy as an engine of growth; the environment as a basis for sustainability; peace and stability as necessary foundations; as well as justice and democracy as pillars of society and accountability.

The urgent need to eradicate poverty, to foster broad-based participation by people in deciding their own destinies and the need to create employment opportunities have each added to the expanding concept of development. Thus, these dimensions must be included in an integrated approach to development if it is to be effective, widespread and lasting. These should therefore cover the development of greater participation at the local level by strengthening local autonomy at the second level of local government.

That having been said, it is obvious that the 1990s represent a period of extraordinary and difficult challenges to the public administration systems of all Governments. Further, given the vulnerabilities and constraints of developing countries, as well as the increasing complexity of their development tasks, there are formidable obstacles to the management of their development. Thus, as noted in the report of the Secretary-General (A/50/847), many countries face the complex task of trying to reform and redefine the role of government in the pursuit of sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

For these reasons, the convening of the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly, the first of its kind, serves to underscore the importance that the international community attaches to the role of public administration and development. In this context, my delegation would like to underline that the development of public administration in any country is very much linked with the political, economic, social and cultural conditions of the country concerned. Thus, there can be no such thing as a set standard model of public administration applicable to all countries. What I believe is commonly agreed is that we need an efficient and effective public administration system for the success of our development, and that the objective of public administration should be primarily to serve the development of our countries, and not vice-versa.

Needless to say, public administration should continually adapt itself and respond to emerging development requirements. It is also clear that if public administration is to continue to provide leadership within the process of achieving sustainable development, it must

at the same time earn the trust and confidence of the public and have the ability to respond to its needs and demands. In this respect I cannot deny that the more developed a country becomes the stronger and the higher quality of public administration it needs. The question is not simply whether we need a small public administration because of the stronger role being played by the private sector. Rather, we need a strong and effective public administration to have a balanced approach across the broad range of development programmes. In many cases, including that of Indonesia, a strong public administration has been the main force contributing to the successful path of development.

We in Indonesia have always considered that the development of public administration lies within the context of our country's basic philosophy, which stresses the development of the complete human being, including political, economic, social, cultural and spiritual development. This translates into what we call the "Trilogy of Development", covering equity, economic growth and stability, which is largely similar to the new broadened concept of development at the international level. However, to the extent that there are differences between the approaches, we do not close our eyes to developments in the world at large, and we are committed to adjusting our public administration system to adapt to such changes and globalization. Therefore, the reform process being conducted in the public administration system in Indonesia can be likened to a dynamic rather than a stop-go process.

In this vein, we are open to and continue to assess modernization reforms in the public administration system. For example, improving the structure of the civil service involves "right sizing" the public sector and the introduction of a new remuneration system. Trimming government size to coincide with growing privatization was facilitated by adapting zero growth policies and adjusting the role of the public sector. This involved, among other factors, the privatization of many State-owned companies. These efforts are expected to reduce public expenditure and to generate increased funds for development financing. Moreover, modernization of the civil service has been initiated through several administrative programmes, which were intended to bring about attitudinal and value changes, improve systems and promote productivity and the quality of management. Efforts were also made to link training with career development through structural, functional and technical training. In this regard, special attention has also been given to the holders of Echelon I positions through the national leadership training programme. This exercise is designed to broaden the perspectives of officials through political and administrative perceptions, and to help increase their understanding of government policies and the policy-making process.

The whole exercise is intended to establish a public administration which is responsive to development needs and at the same time can improve service delivery to the people, establish an open, enabling framework for socio-economic activities and provide an impartial and fair framework for socio-economic interactions. These objectives should also help develop a public administration that is innovative and capable of encouraging the active participation of all sectors of society. This would also include the business sector so that it could maximize the potential and opportunities provided by globalization and international development.

In carrying out policies and programmes — particularly in such areas as the adoption of zero growth policies in the civil service — my Government is at the same time faced with a major problem of facilitating new entrants to the workforce. Therefore, in addressing these problems we also focus our efforts on strengthening the private sector, particularly the informal sector. The central purpose of this initiative is to encourage the creativity of the most disadvantaged sector of society so as to bolster its participation in economic activities and the creation of employment opportunities.

Before concluding, I should like to turn to the role of the United Nations system in promoting public administration. My delegation recognizes the importance of several recommendations contained in the report. Obviously, most of the recommendations need to be further reviewed and studied. Some of the recommendations are in fact already being applied in my own country, and, on the basis of that experience alone, we feel confident in our view that the promotion of the national and human capacity-building of the developing countries should become a central objective of United Nations activities in public administration and development. In this respect, my delegation could not agree more on the need to revitalize the function of the United Nations as a clearing house. It would, we believe, help to facilitate the generating, pooling and disseminating of information as well as customizing the best and most appropriate practices. My delegation is convinced that such activities would provide Member States with practical ways to exchange experience as well as to learn from each other, while taking into account the specific situation and conditions in each country. In addition, practical and action-oriented research should

inject valuable information into the process for Member States.

While recognizing the importance of the role of the clearing house, my delegation is also interested in the recommendation offered under the rubric of coordination of public administration and development activities within the United Nations system. Such coordination activities are always important in strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system. But, to be realistic, it is important that such recommendations for improving coordination should not create a new layer of bureaucracy within the system. Rather, they should serve to strengthen the existing coordination mechanisms of the United Nations. In this context, my delegation would like to raise the question of the modalities of the "consultative group". The group is expected to meet once a year, particularly when it is intended to invite other appropriate international organizations or regional professional and research institutions, often outside the United Nations. We believe that such a group would be well positioned to enhance the effective role of the United Nations in promoting effective public administration and development.

In conclusion, I would be remiss if I failed to mention the importance of the United Nations role in providing technical assistance to the developing countries in the field of public administration and development. We view such activities as essential in assisting developing countries to improve their national and human capacity-building. For this reason, we are pleased to note that there are currently 61 active projects in public administration, with 63 others listed as completed, and that in public finance there are 52 active projects, with 22 others listed as completed. We regard the dimension of technical assistance in this area as unquestionably timely and imperative and believe that the United Nations should increasingly focus on it in its future programmes. It is also imperative that Member States should fully support these programmes. I should add that, South-South cooperation would constitute an important dimension in this process, in that it would provide an existing framework that developing countries could fully utilize as a forum for exchanging views and experience and, in particular, for the strengthening of their institutional capacity-building and human resources development. In this process, the United Nations could certainly play a catalytic and development role. We strongly support the role of the United Nations programme in public administration and finance, and earnestly request that General Assembly resolutions should be vigorously followed up.

The Acting President: I now call on the Chairman of the Council for Public Administration of Mongolia, Mr. Lamjavyn Lingov.

Mr. Lingov *(interpretation from Russian):* Mongolia was among the first to co-sponsor General Assembly resolution 49/136 entitled "Public administration and development" which, *inter alia*, called for the resumed session to consider this issue with a view to exchanging the experiences and reviewing the activities of the United Nations in this field and making relevant recommendations.

The timeliness and importance of the issue is highlighted by the fact that the General Assembly, with the participation of many high-level Government representatives, is, for the first time, discussing in a systemic and comprehensive manner the changing role of public administration in meeting the objectives of sustainable human development. The various aspects of this new development strategy were reflected in the results of the recent important global conferences. A major challenge now for national Governments and the international community at large is to translate them into commensurate individual and collective action. In this regard, effective management and good governance acquire an ever-increasing importance.

My delegation believes that the wide-ranging preparatory activities that preceded the resumed session laid a sound basis for meaningful and fruitful deliberations, which will, hopefully, result in formulating specific ideas and recommendations both for national Governments and the United Nations in strengthening the role of public administration in development. We note with particular interest the report of the Group of Experts in Public Administration and Finance (A/50/525) and the relevant report by the Secretary-General (A/50/847), containing many worthwhile practical recommendations.

We understand full well that the task I have mentioned will require continuous efforts at the national and international levels. In this context, we see much merit in the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report to the effect that the issue of public administration and development should be included as a regular item on the agenda of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and that the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance should be designated the Committee on Public Administration and Development.

Bearing in mind the importance of the subject matter, it is my delegation's considered view that the role of the United Nations should be further strengthened, especially in providing technical assistance and support in the area of administrative restructuring and reform, human resources development, training, resource mobilization and financial management.

Mongolia has since 1990 been undertaking a transition process towards a market economy. A new Constitution, adopted in 1992, laid down the basis for a humane and civil parliamentary democracy, with a unitary State structure and a multi-party system. The transition to a market economy is integral and comprehensive in nature. It consists of four major processes: the adaptation of the State to its new roles, functions, systems and structures; the creation of a policy, legal and institutional framework; the creation and consolidation of a viable private sector through privatization, enterprise restructuring and small and medium-sized enterprise promotion; and capacity building to achieve those processes in the course of the transition itself.

All of these processes are interrelated. Public administration reform is needed to adapt the State to its new roles, functions, systems and structure. This is necessary to both formulate and implement the policy, legal and institutional framework of the transition process. Both the reformed public administration and the policy, legal and institutional framework have as their aim the creation of an enabling environment for private sector development. The fulfilment by the private sector of its economic and social functions in the market economy in turn creates conditions for an effective adaptation of the public administration and policy to their market economy roles. Capacity-building is a necessary precondition for undertaking effective public sector reforms and private sector development. In addition, institutions entrusted with education, training, consultancy and support systems are also in need of adaptation to the new form of governance and society as a whole. This requires the support of the public and private sectors, as well as of the international donor community, in order for them to be able to play their critical role in the transition process. This process must be phased and sequenced.

The Government is called upon to play a critical role in each of the four basic processes of the transition to a market economy. To be effective, the transition process requires strong Government leadership. The absence of private sector input due to historic circumstances that prevailed for nearly seven decades in Mongolia determined its weakness in the early stages of the transition.

The leadership and management challenges during the transition are far more complex than they would have been in a different situation. It is important for the Government to simultaneously three challenges in the transition process: the normal management of the country to fulfil universal, basic governmental functions and to provide stability; systemic change management; and capacity-building to enable it to undertake the change management of the transition process.

It goes without saying that the overall economic, social and political reforms cannot be successfully completed without public administration reform. Government administrative entities should define clearly their roles and functions in the new circumstances; create an economic, social, fiscal and financial environment enabling them to assume their functions to the fullest extent possible; introduce management methods and skills required in the new circumstances and gain capacity to use fully national human resources.

On the other hand, the main direction of Government administrative entities should be customer-services oriented, outsourcing and making them effective, efficient and cost-effective.

This reform will succeed only if all levels starting from the top of the Government executive branch and going down to every single administrative and territorial unit and entity are involved in it.

Apart from the three challenges, I have referred to Governments also face the tasks of meeting the following needs, confronted by all countries at this historic juncture: first, the need for each country to achieve systemic competitiveness for its economy, given the increasing globalization of the world economy; secondly, the need to develop non-bureaucratic forms of organization, given the inter-sectoral nature of contemporary problems and the short response time required for both decision-making and implementation; thirdly, the need for transparency and accountability in public affairs to avoid systemic corruption; and, fourthly, the need for Government responsiveness to citizens' demands and interests, decentralization and participation.

Bearing all this in mind, the Government of Mongolia has formulated and is implementing an integral, comprehensive Management Development Programme (MDP) that embraces the following three areas: first, public sector reforms, including public administration reform, civil service reform, decentralization and local

administration strengthening; secondly, private sector development, including privatization and enterprise restructuring and small and medium-sized enterprise promotion; and, thirdly, policy and support systems, which include policy, legal and institutional framework, management education, training and consultancy, information system and accounting and auditing systems.

The MPD governance structure consists of a Cabinet-level steering committee chaired by the Prime Minister; an MPD working group chaired by a Deputy Prime Minister within the framework of the public/private sector partnership concept; component working groups, with representatives from both the public and private sectors; and management development projects directed by national project managers, under the coordination of the component working groups. In addition to the network of the working groups, each component has an institutional focal point for project execution and accumulation of national expertise in a given area. Ad hoc national project teams assisted by international consultants form the backbone of project work. MDP projects have received technical and advisory assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and support from multilateral and bilateral donors. Staff support for the governance structure and aid coordination is provided by a Strategic Management Unit in the Prime Minister's Office.

The participatory policy and planning process led to the formulation by the component working groups of long-term policies, medium-term programmes and short-run 12-month action plans. These were consolidated in the global programme at the First Global MDP Workshop. Specific measures to generate positive synergies between the components and their focal groups were also incorporated. Annual workshops update the policy, programme and action plan framework and promote synergies among the components and coordination between donors and external cooperation projects.

Within this framework, the public administration and civil service reform component working group formulated in late 1994 a proposal for a public reform policy and a programme and action plan. This was approved by the Cabinet-level steering committee, chaired by the Prime Minister, in early 1995. Subsequently, four national project teams conducted in-depth studies of central Ministries, line Ministries, local administration and the legal framework of the public sector. This work was consolidated in a "Recommended Business Strategy", sub-titled "A Proposal to Re-invent the Government of Mongolia through Reform of the Public Administration". This document was widely discussed at the Second Global MDP Workshop, held in mid-1995 with the participation of national and international experts. The final version was then subsequently considered and approved by the Cabinet for submission to the Parliament. The Parliament of Mongolia is expected to consider the proposal during its spring session this year. A fifth national project team is presently conducting an analysis of the economic implications of the proposal.

The mission statement of our proposed public administration reform reads:

> "To adapt government to the requirements of the transition to a market economy and assist the creation of a viable private sector."

The five strategic objectives of the public administration reform are: to strengthen the national leadership role of the Government and implement major operational improvements; to strengthen the Government's executive management capacity, to strengthen local governance and administration; to provide an enabling environment for the private sector; and to manage public administration reform impacts and adjustments.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize that Mongolia is keen to exchange experience with other countries in the area of formulating management development programmes as a whole, and public administration reform in particular, as well as their implementation and follow-up. It is my delegation's firm belief that this resumed session of the General Assembly will help promote active cooperation of Member States both between themselves and with the United Nations in this area.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.